

WANDERERS THROUGH TO SECOND ROUND

BUT THAT KILLER SPIRIT IS STILL LACKING

By "Chiltern"

Wycombe Wanderers 2, Aveley 1.

WYCOMBE Wanderers are through to the second round of the F.A. Amateur Cup. This win over Athenian League Division Two side Aveley gave them the right to meet Penrith in the second round on January 22. But how near they came to making a mess of it!

Their win was neither clear-cut nor convincing. Oh yes, they had more of the play and looked the better side, but so they should. Once again there was the lack of that killer spirit.

Aveley scored first and gave the Wycombe side—and their fans—the fright of their lives. It was such a simple goal, and John Maskell must take the rap.

Geddes, the Aveley inside-right, collared hold of a through ball well outside the penalty area and tried a long, soft shot. Maskell dived and the ball slipped under his body into the net.

Admittedly it was a goal against the run of play. In the opening minutes Len Worley had worried McConnell, the Aveley goalkeeper, and in the ninth minute the referee waved play on when Gale was upended in the area.

The drizzle, in which the game had kicked off, gave way to bright sun after a quarter-of-an-hour. Unfortunately this did not reflect on the play.

The game developed into a battle between the dour Aveley defence and the Wycombe attack. Merrick was downed on the edge of the penalty box, but the free-kick was cleared.

FAULTLESS

As the Wanderers' forwards began to realise it was up to them, McConnell turned on a magnificent performance in goal. He was tautless in the air and made fantastic saves to Worley and Beck.

The Wycombe inside forwards Horseman and Samuels began slowly, looking extremely lethargic at times. Yet when they decided to get stuck in they looked good.

It was one such effort that brought Wycombe's first goal in the 34th minute. Horseman picked the ball up in midfield and pushed it through to Samuels who had run into an open space. Samuels held on to the ball for just the right amount of time before returning the compliment and Horseman beat McConnell from close in.

Wycombe continued to press for the rest of the half, but without luck. As the whistle was blown for half-time Worley smashed the ball against the crossbar.

After the interval Wycombe continued where they had left off. Merrick went just wide and in the 50th minute Bates netted what looked a good goal, but it was ruled offside. It must have been a split-second decision by the linesman.

But Wycombe too had a let-off 10 minutes later. Abel put the ball in the net with a fine header, but the referee quietened the Aveley jubilation by awarding a free-kick under the crossbar for infringements against Bradshaw and Maskell.

McConnell continued to thrill the crowd with some wonderful saves. Only 19-years-old, he used to play for Spurs Youth side. It's a wonder they ever let him go.

Wycombe's winner came in the 23rd minute of the second-half. Merrick gathered the ball and cut inside. Bates, seeing an opportunity, switched to the outside-left position to receive Merrick's pass, and from a narrow angle cracked it home.

It was a fine goal as the Aveley 'keeper seemed to have the acute angle covered. Bates

deserves full praise for the shot and Merrick for providing the opening. Let's hope this goal will do Bates some good, as he seems to have lost that gusto.

Rundle had a good game at centre-half and Gale instigated some good moves. But I wish he would forget that he has scored four goals this season. On several occasions his wish to score himself overcame his good sense and good moves were wasted.

The 3,500 crowd was the largest in the Amateur Cup throughout the country on Saturday. And at the end they all waited to give McConnell a special cheer as he left the field after being delayed by autograph hunters.

Wycombe Wanderers—J. Maskell; D. Bradshaw, J. Beck; B. Baker, I. Rundle, C. Gale; L. Worley, K. Samuels, P. Bates, T. Horseman, L. Merrick.